

APPENDIX A

The Planning Process

Introduction

Development of this multi-jurisdictional plan addressing the diverse concerns and challenges of a region of seven million people has required a planning process that employs a variety of forums and techniques. These are described in the sections that follow. Development of the plan began with a discussion of the overall scope of work and selection of the key hazards to be addressed and our vulnerabilities. The process then proceeded to a framing of policy goals and finally to a selection of specific mitigation strategies to address the hazards and risks.

This process was familiar to the local governments of the Bay Area. All of the local governments involved in the development of this plan have plans, policies, and/or programs that predate this plan because of:

- ◆ the vulnerability of the Bay Area to natural hazards;
- ◆ our experiences with past disasters;
- ◆ the requirements of the State of California for Safety (and, earlier, Seismic Safety) Elements in city and county General Plans since the early 1970s;
- ◆ California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements (particularly since 1988);
- ◆ the need to develop sophisticated risk and mitigation information on infrastructure as transportation providers and utilities have worked to gain public acceptance for major programs to strengthen the disaster resistance of these facilities; and
- ◆ ABAG's long history of developing hazard maps and risk assessment information.

Our effort has focused on building on these pre-existing efforts and identifying gaps that may lead to disaster vulnerabilities in order to work on ways to address risks through mitigation.

Initial Workshops with Local Government Staff to Identify Hazards, Concerns, and Needs

From June 1 through August 5, 2004, ABAG staff held a series of nine 3-hour forums, one in each of the nine counties in the San Francisco Bay Area. Email invitations were sent to city and town managers, county administrators, planning directors, public works directors, building officials, fire chiefs, and emergency managers of cities and counties. Separate invitations were emailed and faxed to all of the city and county elected officials on ABAG standing committees and the ABAG Executive Board. County emergency managers forwarded the information to their contacts in special districts. ABAG worked with staff of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) so that transit districts would be notified. A total of 260 staff (and two elected officials) from counties, cities, and special districts attended these workshops.

At these meetings, ABAG staff spent approximately two hours discussing the scope of work in developing this plan, demonstrating proposed Internet-based hazard mapping capabilities, discussing the types of risk assessments to be performed, and talking about the general format of the plan.

An hour during each of these three-hour workshops was spent discussing hazards to be addressed, hazard mapping, risk assessment, and hazard mitigation strategies. Each person was individually queried regarding their views on the process, their concerns, and what they viewed as the most important outcomes of this process. This hour-long discussion became more focused and interactive in the later workshops than in the earlier ones. However, the issues identified in later workshops were brought to the attention of the attendees of the earlier workshops through email to ensure adequate feedback.

The immediate result of these workshops and follow-up emails was the “finalization” of the key hazards to be addressed, as well as the draft list of 53 hazard maps to be put into ABAG’s on-line geographic information system (GIS). In addition to the more general issues, some specific concerns were also addressed. For example, several attendees stressed the need to provide adequate explanatory materials on the hazard maps being developed for non-technical local government staff members, elected officials, and the general public. They had discovered this problem while showing hazard maps at past city council meetings. This discussion resulted in a redesign of the map layouts.

ABAG outlined the existing technical reports and studies that have been used as a basis for the hazard assessment, exposure, and vulnerability portion of this plan and encouraged feedback to ensure that they are the most comprehensive and technically accurate reports and studies available. These specific reports are discussed and referenced in the applicable plan sections.

ABAG staff also outlined the pros and cons of organizing the mitigation section of the plan based on the traditional categories of hazards versus organizing this section along functional areas. The consensus of these groups was to organize the plan by functional area (health, housing, education, etc. – not fire, earthquake, flood, etc.). The advantages of this organization scheme were viewed as:

- ◆ stressing opportunities for multi-hazard mitigation;
- ◆ focusing on the positive aspects of what we want to have (housing and a functional transportation system, for example), rather than what we do not want (a fire or earthquake disaster, for example);
- ◆ providing stronger opportunities to integrate hazard mitigation into other areas of planning, such as transportation, housing, and land use, rather than isolating it as an offshoot of emergency response; and
- ◆ creating ways to have a large and diverse region containing numerous cities, counties, and special districts identify what we can do together.

Review and Incorporation of Existing Information

ABAG directed local governments to review the plans and studies described in the *Introduction* to this appendix and provide ABAG with relevant information. In addition, ABAG itself examined the existing technical information available on the various hazards affecting the Bay Area and their impacts. ABAG is very familiar with this information because of the extensive amount of research it has conducted with funding from the U. S. Geological Survey, the National Science Foundation, and others. However, many of the relevant flooding, landsliding, and wildfire data and reports were provided to ABAG following extensive outreach to state and federal agencies, as well as to relevant professional organizations. The result was an extensive

library of publications, including plans, studies, reports, and technical data. The most relevant are referenced as footnotes or are summarized briefly in Appendix C. Additional reports are more relevant to specific local government issues and are cited in specific local annexes to this overall plan.

Mitigation Policy Outline and Review

Having reviewed the discussions at eight of the nine county forums, as well as the draft plans of Berkeley, Napa, and the State of California, ABAG staff developed a draft overall goal and eight basic commitments for the plan. These general policies were presented for comment at the July 15, 2004 meeting of ABAG's Executive Board. This Board is the principal policy Board for ABAG. It meets once every two months and is composed of County Supervisors and City Council members representing all of the counties in the Bay Area and the cities in those counties. Meeting agendas are publicly announced as required by California's Brown Act and are mailed to hundreds of individuals who have requested to receive the agendas. The meetings of this Board are open to the public. While there was considerable discussion on the need to address hazard issues, no substantive changes in the goal or commitments were made.

Next, the goal and policies were presented to ABAG's Regional Planning Committee (RPC) at the September 1, 2004 meeting. RPC is the planning policy committee for ABAG. It meets once every two months and is composed of County Supervisors and City Council members representing all of the counties in the Bay Area and the cities in those counties, as well as environmental, economic, and equity groups. Meeting agendas are publicly announced as required by California's Brown Act and are mailed to hundreds of individuals who have requested to receive the agendas. The meeting was also open to the public and the public had the opportunity to comment. The group discussed the general commitments, recommended a change in the way the commitments were ordered (to their current order), and supported the commitments in concept.

Use of Two ABAG Special-Issue Review Committees

Two committees were used to develop the sections of the plan that address housing safety, business risk, and lifeline issues.

The ABAG Earthquake and Hazards Outreach Committee was tasked to help with development and review of the mitigation strategies related to housing and business. The committee is chaired by an elected official and has members consisting of city staffs, private construction contractors, California Geological Survey and U.S. Geological Survey scientists, and structural engineers (including both private-sector engineers and an engineer from the State Seismic Safety Commission staff).

At the meetings of this Outreach Committee on June 30, 2004 and September 15, 2004, continued integration with the International Code Council (ICC) Joint East Bay-Peninsula Chapter effort to develop housing retrofit standards was discussed, and supported. ABAG's proposed new effort to coordinate with the American Association of Grading Officials on landslide mitigation was also presented and discussed. Concerns for soft-story apartments were

discussed and the need for a full-day charrette and policy forum was expressed. ABAG has been working with, and was encouraged to continue to work with, Lakeshore Ave. businesses in Oakland in an effort to identify ways to improve the resiliency of downtown retail businesses.

The second committee, the ABAG Hazards Transportation and Lifelines Review Committee, is also chaired by an elected official and has members from city and county staffs, local transit districts, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), Caltrans District 4, local water districts, PG&E, SBC Communications, the American Red Cross-Bay Area, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Coastal Region office of the California Office of Emergency Services. This group met on July 26, 2004 to discuss the development of this plan and to brainstorm potential mitigation strategies, particularly those related to transportation, water supply, sewage, power, and communications systems. The ways these issues interrelate to health, education, and the environment were also discussed. A particular effort was made to develop additional, and improve existing, mitigation strategies related to flooding hazards. Additional comments and ideas were obtained from this committee at its meeting of September 16, 2004.

Creation of First Draft of Mitigation Strategies

ABAG staff drafted an outline of mitigation strategies and circulated the strategies to all participating local government agencies and various professional organizations during September 2004. The strategies were created based on comments and discussions of the groups listed above, as well as from a review of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan and draft (at the time) Local Hazard Mitigation Plans of Berkeley, Napa (City), Napa County, and Oakland.

Interaction with Professional Groups

From late July 2004 through November 2004, ABAG staff actively approached various professional organizations and advocacy groups to obtain feedback on the preliminary commitment policy statements and mitigation strategies in the plan. These meetings and workshops were invaluable, in part because they generated active involvement of staff members of consulting firms, construction contractors, universities, and non-governmental agencies.

Formal and informal presentations were given to meetings or workshops of:

- ◆ the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute Northern California Chapter (EERI-NC) Government Committee (July 26, 2004),
- ◆ the ICC East Bay/Peninsula Chapter (July 21, 2004),
- ◆ the American Society of Grading Officials (July 21, 2004), and
- ◆ the FireSafe Councils (August 25, 2004).

At these meetings, ABAG staff stressed the need for feedback and assistance in drafting mitigation strategies that could be incorporated into the general outline of the eight key commitments of this multi-jurisdictional plan. The EERI-NC meeting resulted in a revised draft of the mitigation strategies related to various types of privately-owned and local government buildings vulnerable to earthquake damage. The ICC meeting resulted in an outline of the mitigation strategies related to vulnerability of single-family homes. The ASGO meeting resulted in strategies related to mitigation of landslides. Finally, the FireSafe Councils meeting resulted in the development of the range of strategies related to fire.

Additional outreach to professional organizations occurred in October and November after the first formal plan release on October 6, 2004. (More information on the October 6th event is included in the following section.) These efforts focused on obtaining comments and peer review for the draft strategies and were more outreach than plan development. Presentations were made to the following groups:

- ◆ the Geotechnical Engineering Earthquake Reconnaissance (GEER) group (October 7, 2004) related to landslide mitigation strategies,
- ◆ the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute Northern California Chapter (EERI-NC) Lifeline Committee (October 28, 2004) related to the *Infrastructure* area,
- ◆ San Francisco Community Agencies Responding to Disasters (SF-CARD) (November 4, 2004) related to the *Health* area,
- ◆ the Structural Engineers Association of Northern California (SEAONC) (November 9, 2004), and
- ◆ the California Preservation Foundation (November 18, 2004) related to historic issues under *Housing, Economy, and Government*.

Initial General Public Outreach

The DRAFT Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was distributed at the ABAG General Assembly conference on “Taming Natural Disasters” on October 6, 2004. This conference was widely advertised with printed and email fliers sent to 60,000 people representing local governments, business, social services, engineering, and environmental groups. Comments on additional strategies were solicited at the conference. Conference attendees were encouraged to submit comments.

ABAG used the October 6th conference to encourage the media to help publicize the plan and posted a request for comments on our web site to collect comments from the public. Additional press outreach occurred before October 17, 2004, the 15th anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake, including an article in the San Jose Mercury News, the largest circulation newspaper in the region. We encouraged the public to mail in or email suggestions.

Based on the comments received, the DRAFT Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was revised. All of the comments were addressed. Most were incorporated directly in the plan. People who suggested changes that were not incorporated into the plan were sent replies explaining why the changes were not made. Largely the changes that were not made would have added duplication or would have put the plan’s focus on emergency response, rather than on mitigation. The revised Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was forwarded to FEMA Region IX and the California Office of Emergency Services on October 27, 2004.

Focused Issue Workshops and Additional Outreach and Review

Based on the comments received on the Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan distributed at the October General Assembly on “Taming Natural Disasters,” four issues were identified that would benefit from immediate further work – health and disasters, education and schools,

historic structures, and soft-story multi-family residential buildings. ABAG held focused workshops were held on each of these issues:

- ◆ Health and Disasters on December 14, 2004 – attended by 8 people (including local government public health experts and non-profits),
- ◆ Education and schools on December 16, 2004 – attended by 22 people (largely school district employees), and
- ◆ Soft-Story Residential January 27, 2005 – attended by 45 people (including private contractors, architects, and engineers as well as local government building officials, planners, and elected officials).

ABAG staff used an existing forum organized by the City and County of San Francisco on historic buildings attended by approximately 20 people on January 12, 2005 to gain insight on how to modify the plan rather than holding the meeting at ABAG.

Comments received from OES, FEMA, professional organization outreach in late October and November, and the first two of these focused workshops were incorporated into another version of this Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. These revisions were provided to cities, counties, and special districts for a final round of comment in early January 2005.

Again, *all* of the comments received were reviewed. Again, most suggestions were incorporated directly in the plan. Again, people who suggested that changes be made that were not incorporated into the plan were sent replies explaining why the changes were not made. Again, almost all suggested changes that were not incorporated were not made because they would have added duplication or made the plan's focus on emergency response, rather than on mitigation. All changes to the mitigation portion of this plan were finalized on January 28, 2005.

A Note on General Public Participation and Outreach

While every effort has been made to make this entire process open and accessible for public participation, the general low level of interest and knowledge of hazards and mitigation by a many members of the public makes outreach more difficult than for other issues, such as traffic, education, or crime. Thus, an extensive effort was made to supplement typical outreach efforts with extensive interaction with “publics” that, by definition, are more interested in this process – existing ABAG committees, local governments, and professional organizations. This conclusion does not mean that the public did not examine the plan. For example, the “home page” for the “web site” set up for this effort, <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation>, received 2,870 “hits” from October-December 2004. In addition, the plan was developed by focusing outreach both on each *hazard*, and on each commitment (or *functional area*).

While outreach to neighboring local governments might normally be appropriate in the development of a plan such as this, because the area covered by this plan is so large, the logical neighboring entity is the State of California. Staff members of the State Seismic Safety Commission, California Geological Survey, California Department of Forestry, and Coastal Regional Office of Emergency Services were all involved in the development of this plan. Some additional outreach with reclamation districts that own levees in the delta areas will be brought into future workshops held by the ABAG Hazards Transportation and Lifelines Review Committee.

Additional Information on the Local Planning Process, Public Participation, and Outreach

In addition to the information provided in this section, many cities, counties, and special districts held additional meetings and workshops as part of the process needed to identify their specific hazards, risks, and appropriate mitigation strategies. At a minimum, the mitigation strategies were reviewed at an open meeting of the organization's Council or Board. For more information on each jurisdiction's planning process, see the specific annexes prepared by that local government.

Finally, the contributions of each local government to the development of this overall plan are detailed in Appendix E. The tables in this appendix specify which local governments attended which ABAG forum or workshop, those that provided written or oral comments on various aspects of the overall plan (including providing information on critical government facilities), and the name and contact information for those individuals who worked directly on this effort. While Appendix E is not on ABAG's web site, it has been forwarded to State OES and FEMA.

This Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, as well as the ABAG Annex to the Plan, were adopted at the public meeting of ABAG's Executive Board on March 17, 2005.